

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BU, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH ZHIVKOV

REF: SOFIA 0450

1. SUMMARY. IN LENGTHY PRIVATE CONVERSATION FOLLOWING PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS, ZHIVKOV (A) EXPRESSED DESIRE FOR CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS FOR WHICH "CONDITIONS NOW FAVORABLE"; (B) PROMISED HIS PERSONAL ASSISTANCE IN OVERCOMING "OBTUSENESS OF BUREAUCRACY"; (C) EMPHASIZED DANGERS OF NUCLEAR WAR AND PAID TRIBUTE TO PRESIDENT NIXON FOR DETENTE AND SEARCH FOR AREAS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST; (D) WELCOMED FORTHCOMING VISITS BY SECRETARY DENT AND CODEL SPARKMAN TO BULGARIA; (E) SPOKE FAVORABLE OF U.S. TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS FROM WHICH BULGARS WOULD LIKE OBTAIN BENEFITS IF POSSIBLE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN FRIENDLY 35-MINUTE MEETING FOLLOWING PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS (FULL MEMCON BY AIRGRAM), ZHIVKOV DEFINED COMMON TASK OF BOTH COUTRIES AS MAINTAINING AND DEVELOPING GOOD RELATIONS, CONDITIONS FOR WHICH WERE NOW FAVORABLE. DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S. DID NOT POSE ANY THREAT TO SOCIALIST SOCIETY IN BULGARIA "AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LONG AS SUCH CONTACTS ARE IN CULTURAL FRAMEWORK". NO

OBSTACLES EXISTED ON BULGARIAN SIDE, HE CONTINUED, "OTHER THAN OBTUSENESS OF BUREAUCRACY IN SOME GOB OFFICES". ZHIVKOV WELCOMED VISIT OF SECRETARY DENT AND OTHER U.S. OFFICIALS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, AS OPPORTUNITIES TO "WIDEN RELATIONS ON ALL FRONTS AND IN ALL FIELDS."

3. ZHIVKOV FRANKLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT MUCH DEPENDED ON U.S. RELATIONS WITH USSR, SINCE BULGARS WOULD ALWAYS BE ON SOVIET SIDE. BUT IF "RELATIONS WITH USSR ARE GOOD, RELATIONS WITH BULGARIA WILL BE GOOD, PERHAPS EVEN BETTER".

4. ZHIVKOV SAID I WOULD HAVE FULL COOPERATION OF BULGARIAN SIDE AND ASKED THAT ANY PROBLEMS BE TAKEN PERSONALLY TO HIM OR THE PRIME MINISTER. IN RESPONSE I NOTED WITH PLEASURE HIS OFFER OF ASSISTANCE IN OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES AND EMPHASIZED THAT I REGARDED THIS AS FIRST IN CONTINUING SERIES OF MEETINGS WHICH SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE CONFINED TO DIFFICULTIES. FIRST PHASE IN DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS IS "NORMALIZATION", SOME ELEMENTS OF WHICH ARE NOT YET IN PLACE, BUT I HOPED IT WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY TO RAISE THESE MATTERS WHEN WE WOULD MEET NEXT. WHEN CERTAIN REMAINING ANOMALIES AND ANACHRONISMS HAVE BEEN REMOVED, MEASURES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO BROADEN AND EXPAND OUR RELATIONS IN VARIETY OF FIELDS.

5. IN DISCUSSING ATMOSPHERE AND MOOD IN THE UNITED STATES I POINTED TO INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH OF OUR GOVERNMENT WHICH IS MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO INFLUENCE OF PUBLIC OPINION. THUS CERTAIN ASPECTS OF OUR RELATIONS WHICH COULD IRRITATE U.S. PUBLIC OPINION COULD REFLECT ON OUR ABILITY TO DEVELOP RELATIONS WITH BULGARIA IN THE DIRECTION WE DESIRE. MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, SUCH AS WITH THE FORTHCOMING IPU DELEGATION, WERE QUITE IMPORTANT IN DEVELOPING A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS.

6. ZHIVKOV SAID HE DID NOT WISH TO COMMENT ON INTERNAL AMERICAN DEVELOPMENTS BUT DID WISH TO EXPRESS HIS VIEW THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS ESTABLISHED A PLACE IN HISTORY FOR HIS VERY POSITIVE WORK FOR DETENTE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.

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ZHIVKOV THEN WENT ON TO DISCOURSE ON THE DANGERS OF NUCLEAR WAR, SAYING THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD SUFFER "MORE THAN ANY OTHER NATION" IN SUCH A CATASTROPHE. I SAID THE PRESIDENT IS INDEED AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF WAR TO EVERYONE CONCERNED, INCLUDING BYSTANDERS, BUT THAT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO THINK THAT THE UNITED STATES COULD BE PUSHED AROUND. PEACE COULD BEST BE MAINTAINED BY AN EQUILIBRIUM, AND ANY EFFORT TO UPSET THE BALANCE WOULD

BE ETREMELY DANGEROUS.

7. ZHIVKOV NODDED AGREEMENT AND THEN SPOKE OF THE ADVANCES OF AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY, PARTICULARLY IN THE APPLICATION OF SATELLITES FOR DISCOVERY OF EARTH RESOURCES. HE SAID BULGARIA WAS ANXIOUS TO OBTAIN MODERN TECHNOLOGY FROM THE WEST. (EARLIER HE REFERRED TO BULGAR DESIRE TO "DO THINGS ON AN AMERICAN SCALE".) HE RECOGNIZED AMERICAN SUPERIORITY IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BUT SAID THE SOVIET UNION WAS ALSO MAKING ADVANCES AND WOULD EVENTUALLY CATCH UP. IF TECHNOLOGY WOULD NOT BE AVAILABE FROM THE UNITED STATES, IT WOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM THE USSR SOMEWHAT LATER. I POINTED OUT HOW UNDER OUR SYSTEM WE CAN ENCOURAGE PRIVATE FIRMS TO MOVE INTO EASTERN EUROPE BUT THAT THE ULTIMATE DECISION LIES WITH THEM. I WELCOMED INCREASING CONTACTS BETWEEN BULGARIA AND U.S. COMPANIES AND SAID I WOULD ENCOURAGE THESE DEVELOPMENTS. ZHIVKOV REPLIED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIVATE CAPITAL BUT THAT HE ALSO REALIZED THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON IN REACHING FAVORABLE DECISIONS.

9. TONE OF THE MEETING WAS CORDIAL AND FRIENDLY THROUGH-OUT AND, AS IN HIS PUBLIC REMARKS (REPORTED SEPARATELY), ZHIVKOV CHOSE TO EMPHASIZE THE EXISTING POSSIBILITIES FOR AN AMELIORATION OF RELATIONS. IN CONCLUSION HE SAID: "BULGARIA IS INTERESTED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WIDE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. IF THE RIGHT CONDITIONS ARE CREATED WE WILL EXPAND THEM. IF THEY ARE NOT CREATED WE WILL BE VERY SORRY".

10. IN ADDITION TO USUAL STORY PAGE ONE RABOTNICHESKO DELO (WHICH CONTAINED FAIR AND ACCURATE SUMMARY OF MY REMARKS AND THOSE OF ZHIVKOV), CEREMONY GIVEN FILM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COVERAGE ON NATIONWIDE TELEBISION. UNDERSTAND THAT FILM WILL ALSO BE USED NEXT WEEK IN NEWSREEL SHOWN IN MOVIE THEATERS AROUND COUNTRY.
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